

REMARKS

Claims 21-26 are pending in this application and have been rejected. No claims stand objected to. The Applicants herein amend Claims 21-26. The support for Claims 21-26, as amended, are found in Example 7 of the specification (page 21, line 25 to page 22, line 2). The Applicants herein add new Claim 37, which finds support at page 13, line 20 to page 14, line 10 of the instant specification. Therefore, the Applicants introduce no new matter with any of these amendments.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 21-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The Examiner has not found the Applicants' arguments of record in this regard persuasive, because he argues that the decrease in binding of a polypeptide and its receptor is not an adequate activity of a compound that would satisfy the enablement requirement of 35 U.S.C., first paragraph. The Examiner appears to base these rejections on a lack of a link in the claims to the binding of the polypeptide to its receptor and a measurable or assayable activity. He concludes that without having a measurable activity, the skilled artisan would not know how to use a method of screening a compound that affects the binding of a polypeptide ligand and its receptor.

As suggested by the Examiner, the Applicants herein amend Claim 21 (and dependent Claims 22-26) to link the decrease in number of bound B cells, a measurable activity, to the decreased binding of the polypeptide ligand with its B cell receptor. The Applicants also add new Claim 37, which links a decrease in activation of NF-κB cells with a decrease in binding of the recited polypeptide ligand with its receptor. In view of these amendments, the Applicants assert Claims 21-26, as amended, and new Claim 37 are enabled by the instant specification. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 21-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Yu, *et al.* (US 6,716,576). According to the Examiner, Yu, *et al.* teach a method of

screening for a compound that involves an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1. In that the Applicants amended Claim 21 to include the phrase, "an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1", the Examiner now contends that Claim 21 has been broadened to read on any fragment of SEQ ID NO:1, including that described in Yu, *et al.* To overcome this rejection, the Applicants took the Examiner's suggestion to amend Claim 21 to read, "the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1." Accordingly, the Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

The Applicants reserve the right to prosecute, in one or more continuing patent applications, the claims as originally filed, and any other claim that is supported by the instant specification. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that the subject application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any remaining objections or concerns, the Applicants invite him to contact the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the below telephone number to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,


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